REMARKS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 28, 2010. Claims 1, 4-7, 10-13, 16 and 17 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 7 and 13 are in independent form. Claims 1, 7 and 13 have been amended to define aspects of Applicants' invention more clearly. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,943,508 (*Penny et al.*), in view of alleged Admitted Prior Art (*AAPA*) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,735 (*Yaguchi*); that Claims 7 and 13 are rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Penny et al.* in view of *AAPA*; that Claims 10 and 16 are rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Penny et al.* in view of *AAPA,* and *Yaguchi;* and that Claim 5-6, 11-12 and 17 are rejected under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Penny et al.* in view of *AAPA*; and *Yaguchi*, in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0047666 (*Mitchell et al.*). Applicants submit that independent Claims 1, 7 and 13, together with the claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to provide that a predetermined number of code converting units are classified into a plurality of code converting unit groups, and that a task is assigned to one of the groups in accordance with a priority. By virtue of these features, a wait time for a code converting unit to become available for a task of a high priority is significantly reduced or even prevented.

Penney et al. merely discloses an arrangement for assigning all processors to sources successively. *Penny et al.* fails, however, to disclose or suggest any idea of

classifying a predetermined number of code converting units into a plurality of code

converting unit groups, and assigning a task to one of the groups in accordance with a

priority. Particularly, *Penney et al.* fails to teach, suggest or otherwise disclose

> a plurality of request-source task units, each request-source
> task unit configured to issue a processing request to any one
> of the predetermined number of code converting units in a
> predetermined code converting unit group to perform a
> corresponding task, the number of request-source task units
> being greater than the predetermined number of code
> converting units and having priorities set in advance,
> wherein each request-source task unit having a high priority
> reserves one of the predetermined number of code
> converting units in the predetermined code converting unit
> group, and each request-source task unit having a low
> priority competes for at least one of a plurality of non-
> reserved code converting units in code converting unit
> groups other than the predetermined code converting unit
> group, the number of non-reserved code converting units
> being less than the number of request-source task units
> having the low priority,

as recited in Claim 1. Indeed, according to *Penney et al.*, even if the priority of the task is

high, when the code converting unit is busy, the task unit must stand by until the code

converting unit becomes idle.

AAPA merely discloses an arrangement in which the number of code

converting units is the same as the number of tasks and has not been found to remedy the

deficiencies of *Penny et al.* The other cited references also fail to disclose or suggest

classifying a predetermined number of code converting units into a plurality of code

converting unit groups, and assigning a task to one of the groups in accordance with a

priority, as the present invention performs as recited in Claim 1.

Applicants submit that a combination of *Penny et al.*, *AAPA* and *Yaguchi*

assuming such combination would even be permissible, would fail to teach or suggest the

features discussed above in connection with the "plurality of request source task units" recited in Claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is patentable over the cited art, and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Independent Claims 7 and 13 include assigning a task to one of the groups in accordance with a priority as discussed above in connection with Claim 1. Therefore, those claims also are believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. The other rejected claims in the present application depend from one or another of independent Claims and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. However, because each dependent claim also is deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place the present application in condition for allowance. Therefore, entry of this Amendment under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 is believed proper and is respectfully requested, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and an early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/Jonathan Berschadsky/
Jonathan Berschadsky
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 46,551

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York, New York 10104-3800
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200